

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

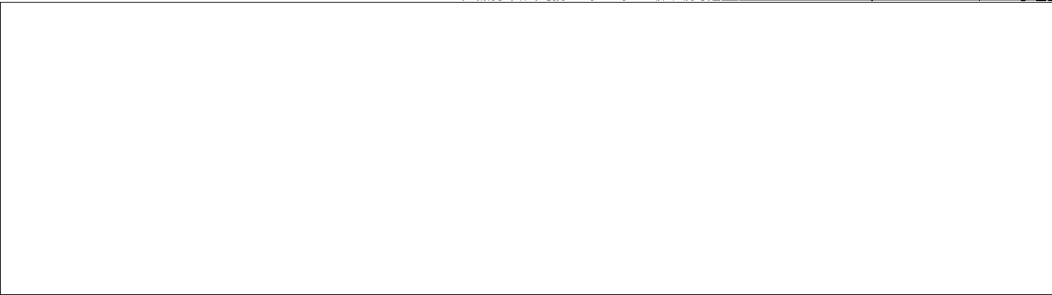
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| COUNTRY | USSR (Kalinin Oblast) | REPORT | |
| SUBJECT | Health and Medical Conditions at Podberezye | DATE DISTR. | 2 December 1953 |
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REPORT

COUNTRY : USSR

DATE DISTR. 26 OCT 53

SUBJECT : Health and Medical Conditions at Podberezye

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2. Podberezye had a dry, healthy climate and was situated on the Volga in the Kimry District of the Kalinin governmental area. [redacted] the population of Podberezye was 15,000, of whom 1,600 were German specialists. The factory [redacted] was directly on the Volga River. There were about eight large stone apartment buildings directly behind the factory and it was in this area that the Germans were housed. In addition the city had many so-called Finnish houses, which were one-story single unit prefabricated wooden houses obtained as reparations after World War II. [redacted]
3. The city was undeveloped and apparently existed only because of the institute activities. The roads were unpaved. The only transportation available was by truck. The city had no railroad facilities. Travel by ship was possible in the warm weather and a ship's lock was located in the Volga at Podberezye. A tiny airport nearby was occasionally used by a World War I type plane. This plane once transported a patient to Kalinin.

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4. [redacted] there were many children born in the area. The people usually married at an early age, and both parents worked. Families usually consisted of the parents, children and old grandparents.

FOOD SUPPLY

5. Food was sold in city stores and on the open market place. Meat always bore a stamp of approval from a veterinarian when it was sold in these outlets. However, handling of the food on sale was very careless and unsanitary. Fish from the Volga was highly prized and quite tasty; salted fish was also sold in large quantities. The supply of vegetables was poor. Usually cabbage and carrots were on sale, and occasionally green tomatoes in vinegar. Cucumbers were eaten very often by the Soviets.
6. The city had a bread factory which supplied the people with bread, their most important food staple. Flour was unobtainable and consequently ready-made bread was eaten. Usually fighting broke out among the purchasers who crowded to buy the bread as soon as it went on sale.
7. Unpasteurized milk was sold in open containers on the market place or from house-to-house. It was generally of excellent flavor. On the market place a check point was set up to control the quality of milk sold, [redacted] 50X1-HUM

MEDICAL FACILITIES

8. The city had a polyclinic located in a wooden barracks. The physicians here were women who were specialists in various fields of medicine, e. g., neurology, internal medicine, and gynecology. In general the care was not satisfactory and was regarded as such by the Germans. [redacted] 50X1-HUM
9. The city hospital was also in a one-story wooden barracks 20 meters by 10 meters. Care here was merely adequate. Food was not supplied to the patients but was obtained from home. Visitors were not permitted. Medical specialists were occasionally requested from Moscow.
10. Dental care at the city polyclinic was furnished by two dentists. In addition a dentist [redacted] visited the city every Sunday to offer his services which were apparently good. These visits were probably on a private basis because when the dentist ceased to appear it was not possible to learn his name from the polyclinic doctors. 50X1-HUM
11. Medical care of higher caliber was available in Kimry, but referral of cases from Podberezye was required before Kimry facilities could be utilized.
12. Other than the polyclinic and hospital no additional medical care was available to the people. The physicians at these installations carried out immunizations of children in the schoolroom, where they also performed examinations for personal hygiene and took blood samples for malaria tests.
13. The factory had a small dispensary which was staffed by a woman army major, and a male feldsher army captain. Minor medical care was offered at this dispensary.

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14. Perhaps because the city was new and undeveloped, no modern therapeutic treatment was available. [] no blood transfusions, and never 50X1-HUM
[] of offense or defense measures for possible major disasters
such as bacteriological warfare. 50X1-HUM

15. No facilities for medical or allied training were available in Podberezye. However, Kimry had a school for training medical feldshers. [] 50X1-HUM

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

16. A pharmacy was located in a shop in our apartment building. This store appeared to be well stocked with ordinary supplies, e. g., ointments, vitamins, pyramidon, and similar items. Penicillin was readily obtainable from Moscow.

INSECTS

17. Insect pests were present in swarms. Flies were particularly annoying, and bedbugs were everywhere. These pests were combatted with DDT which was available, and with petroleum which was used also as a fuel for kitchen ranges. It was often necessary to sleep with the light burning to discourage the insects at night.

DISEASES

18. The principal diseases of the area were malaria, hepatitis, tuberculosis and children's sicknesses. Because of an overflowing of the Volga banks during flood season, the city had breeding areas for mosquitoes which were apparently of the anopheles type. The World War I type plane mentioned above was used to spray powder over these areas to control the mosquitoes. Akrikhin tablets were distributed by health authorities to all the inhabitants, even the children, in order to combat the malaria infection. The malaria prevalent was known as Russian malaria. It was characterized by a three-day fever, which promptly responded to an injection of unknown composition to me. The Soviets did not regard the disease as serious. Hepatitis was fairly common. We cannot identify this disease more correctly. On one occasion my wife was affected with the disease and was required to receive insulin shots and to consume sugar over an 18-day period. This therapy was apparently successful for her symptoms disappeared.
19. The tuberculosis incidence was high among the Soviet citizens. As for children's diseases [] no [] difference 50X1-HUM
in the situation in the USSR from that in Germany; scarlet fever
and measles generally occurred in mild epidemic form. 50X1-HUM

WATER SUPPLY

20. The city had a water supply system which serviced the apartment building section only. The hospital, which was in one of the wooden type houses had no water supply and water had to be carried to it from outside. The city had a small reservoir which was filled by pumps from wells. The water was not pleasant in flavor, and was sometimes short in summer. The upper story of the apartments frequently were unable to obtain water from their faucets because of low pressure. No mineral water could be purchased, but beer, vodka, and wine were available.

SANITATION

21. The city was located on a sandy ground. Rains caused mud along the unpaved streets, and the area was subject to swamp formation because of residual ponds left by the receding Volga in post-flood seasons.

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22. Garbage was collected regularly. Large aluminum bins for garbage disposal were placed in front of the apartments. These bins were obtained from the factory.
23. The usual method for disposal of the dead was burial. The actual burial had to be performed by the friends or relatives of the deceased.
24. The apartments in which we lived had operating sanitary toilets. Sewage from the apartments emptied into a settling basin near the apartments in a depression away from the Volga bank; [] 50X1-HUM
[] it emptied into the Volga River. The remaining 50X1-HUM sections of the city had no sewerage system and latrines were commonly employed in the wooden house districts. Even the open market place had a latrine set up for the use of the people. Human excreta was used to fertilize the farm land.

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